

## 2<sup>ND</sup> BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM 05-07

The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, “Iron Brigade,” deployed in early November from Baumholder, Germany in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07.

The Iron Brigade made history when they became the first Heavy Brigade Combat Team serving as the CENTCOM Theater Reserve deployed to Kuwait and ready to respond anywhere in the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility. The brigade maintained a high state of readiness and trained at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. While stationed in Camp Buehring, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade planned, built, and executed the first Expert Infantryman Badge and Expert Field Medical Badge training in a combat environment resulting in 163 EIBs with 40 true blue and 6 EFMBs out of 83 tested. In order to stay proficient on all weapon systems, the Iron Brigade built a fully functional multi-purpose range complex which allowed units to conduct full mounted and dismounted gunnery qualification tables which facilitated both Abrams tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles. The tireless efforts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team assisted CFLCC in establishing a top training area for deploying units, and supplied CENTCOM commanders with a highly trained Heavy Mechanized Infantry Brigade ready to complete any mission required.

Led by Col. Robert Scurlock, Jr., and Command Sgt. Maj. Jose Santos, the 2nd BCT has participated in operations all over Iraq. The Brigade headquarters deployed to Baghdad, but the Iron Brigade had units attached throughout the entire Iraq Area of Operations. Iron Soldiers were also attached to 1st BCT, 1st Arm. Div., in Ramadi, and to the 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., in Baghdad, Iraq.

While the Iron Brigade conducted rigorous training in Kuwait, Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment were called forward to support the 4th BCT, 4th Infantry Division's operations during OPERATION SCALES OF JUSTICE in southern Baghdad in early March of 2006. The remainder of the brigade continued to train in Kuwait, and in May, 2006, Soldiers from both 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, and 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment were called forward along with a one hundred Soldier strong FLE from 47<sup>th</sup> FSB to deploy to Ramadi to support the 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division. In late July, 2006, at the request of the Government of Iraq, and the Multi-National Division – Baghdad, the remainder of the 2nd BCT, 1st Arm. Div., moved to Baghdad to begin conducting OPERATION TOGETHER FORWARD in Western Baghdad. The Iron Brigade received control of several units for this operation including the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 4th Inf. Div., the 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Inf. Div., and the 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, Stryker Brigade Combat team, 2nd Inf. Div.

The units of the 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd BCT, 1st Arm. Div. served with the 4th Inf. Div., and the 1st and 2nd BCT, 1st Arm. Div. Battery C served with the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 4th Inf. Div., while Battery A served with the 8th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt. The Headquarters element of the 4th Bn., 27th FA Regt operated at Forward Operating Base Justice in support of two Iraq Army brigades. The batteries of the battalion operated primarily as motorized infantry for this deployment while maintaining the ability to employ their howitzers when needed. Elements of the unit also operated in Ramadi and Baghdad.

The units of the 40th Engineer Battalion, 2nd BCT, 1st Arm. Div., served with the 2nd BCT 1st Arm. Div., the 1st BCT of the 1st Arm. Div., and the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. The companies' main mission was counter IED operations and route reconnaissance, operating in both Ramadi and Baghdad. The headquarters element provided civil military operations such as trash removal, structure repair, and provided counter mobility operations for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team while in Baghdad during OPERATION TOGETHER FORWARD.

The 47th Forward Support Battalion, 2nd BCT, 1st Arm. Div. served with the 2nd BCT, 1st Arm. Div., and the 1st BCT, 1st Arm. Div. The battalion provided medical care, maintenance support, and supplied the brigade and attached units with the supplies and equipment it needed to accomplish its missions. Typically an MP mission, Soldiers of 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team showed their flexibility again when the 47<sup>th</sup> FSB took on the mission of operating and controlling the 4th Inf. Div. detainee holding annex, which was used to temporarily hold suspected anti-Iraqi forces.

This deployment provided the Iron Soldiers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team the opportunity to demonstrate their remarkable flexibility and make history in the process. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Div was the first Heavy Brigade to operate as the CENTCOM Theater Reserve, and the first brigade to complete EIB and EFMB training and testing in a combat environment.

The Soldiers of the Iron Brigade performed many diverse missions during their time in the CENTCOM area of operations. The 2nd BCT affected the lives of people all across Iraq, and helped to make it a better, more secure, and a safer place.

